

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A scribing device for a brittle material substrate, which continuously heats a region along a line to be scribed on a surface of the brittle material substrate at a temperature lower than a softening point of the brittle material substrate and, also, continuously cools a region in the vicinity of the heated region, thereby forming a blind crack  
5 along said line to be scribed, the device comprising:

a light source;

a polarizing beam splitter splitting light from the light source based on a polarization state, said polarizing beam splitter transmitting the split light in a specific polarization direction;

an optical fiber arranged such that light transmitted through said polarizing beam splitter  
10 enters the region of the blind crack formation in the vicinity of the cooled region on the surface of said brittle material substrate and the light reflected by the blind crack is returned to said polarizing beam splitter;

a light reception element receiving reflected light from said blind crack via said polarizing beam splitter; and

15 a determination unit including a window comparator, said determination unit with said window comparator determining whether a level of light receiving signal obtained from said light reception element is between predetermined thresholds  $V_{ref1}$  and  $V_{ref2}$ ,  $V_{ref1}$  being greater than  $V_{ref2}$ , wherein a shape state of the blind crack is determined based on an output from said ~~determination unit~~ window comparator, said determination unit with said window  
20 comparator determining a defective blind crack when said level of light receiving signal is

greater than  $V_{ref1}$  or lower than  $V_{ref2}$ , said determination unit with said window comparator determining a normal blind crack when said level of light receiving signal is between  $V_{ref1}$  and  $V_{ref2}$ .

2 - 8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A scribing method for a brittle material substrate, in which a region along a line to be scribed on a surface of a brittle material substrate is continuously heated at a temperature lower than a softening point of the brittle material substrate and, also, a region in the vicinity of the heated region is continuously cooled, such that a blind crack is formed along said line to be scribed, the method comprising:

providing a determination unit comprising a comparator means;

splitting light from a light source with a polarizing beam splitter based on a polarization state;

allowing light in a specific polarization direction, having transmitted through said polarizing beam splitter, to enter the region of the blind crack formation in the vicinity of the cooled region on the surface of said brittle material substrate via an optical fiber;

returning the light reflected by the blind crack to said polarizing beam splitter via said optical fiber;

receiving the light split by said polarizing beam splitter from the reflected light from the blind crack with a light reception element; [[and]]

determining whether a level of light receiving signal obtained from said light reception element is between a predetermined upper light receiving signal threshold and a predetermined lower light receiving signal threshold with said comparator means to provide a comparator means output, ~~whereby the brittle material substrate is scribed while determining a condition~~  
20 ~~of the blind crack formation of the brittle material substrate~~, said predetermined upper light receiving signal threshold being greater than said predetermined lower light receiving signal threshold;

determining a condition of the blind crack formation based on said comparator means output with said determination unit when the brittle material substrate is scribed;

25 continuing to scribe ~~scribing~~ the brittle material when said level of light receiving signal is less than or equal to said predetermined upper light receiving signal threshold and greater than or equal to said predetermined lower light receiving signal threshold, wherein the brittle material is not scribed when said level of light receiving signal is greater than said predetermined upper light receiving signal threshold or less than said predetermined lower light receiving signal  
30 threshold.

10 - 14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) An automated breaking line system for a brittle material substrate, the automated breaking line system comprising:

a device for breaking the brittle material substrate; and

a scribing device for scribing a brittle material substrate, said scribing device  
5 continuously heating a region along a line to be scribed on a surface of the brittle material  
substrate at a temperature lower than a softening point of the brittle material substrate and  
continuously cooling a region in the vicinity of the heated region such that a blind crack along  
said line to be scribed is formed, said scribing device including:

a light source for emitting light;

10 a polarizing beam splitter splitting light from said light source based on a  
polarization state, said polarizing beam splitter transmitting light in a polarization direction;

an optical fiber receiving light split via said polarizing beam splitter, said optical  
fiber guiding said light split via said polarizing beam splitter such that light enters the region of  
the blind crack formation in an area of the cooled region on the surface of the brittle material  
15 substrate, said optical fiber receiving the light reflected by the blind crack such that said optical  
fiber transmits said light to said polarizing beam splitter;

a light reception element receiving reflected light from said blind crack via said  
polarizing beam splitter; and

a determination unit including a window comparator means for determining to  
20 ~~determine~~ whether an amount of light received via said light reception element is within a  
predetermined upper light receiving threshold  $V_{ref1}$  and a predetermined lower light receiving  
threshold  $V_{ref2}$  to provide a comparator means output, said predetermined upper light  
receiving threshold  $V_{ref1}$  being greater than said predetermined lower light receiving threshold  
 $V_{ref2}$ , ~~wherein~~ said determination unit determining a formation state of the blind crack is

25 ~~determined~~ based on ~~[[an]]~~ said output from said ~~determination unit~~ window comparator means,  
said formation state of the blind crack being a defective formation state when said amount of  
light received via said light reception element is greater than said predetermined upper light  
receiving threshold Vref1 or less than said predetermined lower light receiving threshold Vref2,  
said formation state of the blind crack being a normal formation state when said level of light  
30 received via said light reception element is greater than or equal to said predetermined lower  
light receiving threshold Vref2 and less than or equal to said predetermined upper light  
receiving threshold Vref1.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) A scribing device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said  
shape state of the blind crack is continuously determined based on said output from said  
determination part when the brittle substrate material is scribed.

18. (Previously Presented) A scribing device in accordance with claim 1, wherein the  
brittle substrate material is not scribed when said level of light receiving signal obtained from  
said light reception element is not within said predetermined thresholds.

19. (Previously Presented) A scribing method in accordance with claim 9, wherein said  
condition of the blind crack formation of the brittle material substrate is continuously

determined.

20. (Previously Presented) A scribing method in accordance with claim 9, wherein the brittle substrate material is not scribed when said level of light receiving signal obtained from said light reception element is not within predetermined thresholds.

21. (Previously Presented) An automated breaking line system in accordance with claim 15, wherein said shape state of the blind crack is continuously determined based on said output from said determination part when the brittle substrate material is scribed.

22. (Previously Presented) An automated breaking line system in accordance with claim 15, wherein the brittle substrate material is not scribed when said level of light receiving signal obtained from said light reception element is not within predetermined thresholds.

23. (Previously Presented) A scribing device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said determination unit determines whether said level of light receiving signal is within said predetermined thresholds when light is projected on a surface of said substrate, said determination unit not determining whether said level of light receiving signal is within said predetermined thresholds when light is projected at a scribe starting point of said substrate and a scribe ending point of said substrate.